COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

July 2008

This newsletter provides quick updates on issues of interest to members and affiliates of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). This issue covers the period of spring and summer 2008.

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Council welcomes four new Executive Heads

Four new Executive Heads will have assumed their leadership role at our member institutions in July and August 2008. With their arrival, Council bid a fond farewell to outgoing presidents Dr. Samy Mahmoud (Carleton University), Dr. Judith Woodsworth (Laurentian University), Dr. Gilles Patry (University of Ottawa), Dr. Ross Paul (University of Windsor) and Dr. John Scott Cowan (Royal Military College of Canada), who have steered their respective universities through periods of growth and transformation and, at the same time, advanced the cause of higher education in the province.

DR. ROSEANN O'REILLY RUNTE, Carleton University

Dr. Roseann O'Reilly Runte joins Carleton as the university's 13th president, having served as President of Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA, since 2001. She will continue the mandate that she instituted at Old Dominion – which is to focus on students and their needs, with special attention to personal triumphs.

Dr. Runte, who earned her BA *summa cum laude* from the State University of New York, noted that it was in fact a conversation with her university's president that led her to consider a career in academics and leadership in education. "At that time there were no women presidents at all, so there were no role models. Thinking of that day reminds me how important it is for each of us to take the time to encourage others," said Dr. Runte.

Dr. Runte served as Chair of the Department of French and then as Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science at Dalhousie University in Halifax. In 1983 she was appointed President of l'Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia; served as Principal of York University's Glendon College from 1988 to 1994; and then as President of Victoria University (which is part of the University of Toronto) from 1994 to 2001.

Her many awards include the Order of Canada, the French Order of Merit and a number of honourary degrees. Dr. Runte, who earned her MA and PhD from the University of Kansas, is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

ALLAN ROCK, University of Ottawa

Former Liberal cabinet minister Allan Rock has assumed the presidency of the University of Ottawa. A native of Ottawa and an alumnus of the university (earning his BA and LLB), Mr. Rock, who is bilingual, is the university's first Anglophone president in decades.

"The bilingual character of the University of Ottawa is what makes it unique, and why I sought out the position. It allows the institution to play an important role in promoting and advancing the French language and the Franco-Ontarian culture," he said. Mr. Rock says that he feels both honoured and fortunate that he is able to contribute to this crucial dimension of the university's foundation – especially following the remarkable work of outgoing president Gilles Patry in managing the university's substantial growth.

Mr. Rock brings a wealth of national and international experience to this new position. He enjoyed a successful legal career and moved into politics in 1993 when he was elected as a Member of Canada's Parliament.

He subsequently served as Minister of Justice and Attorney General; as Minister of Health, where he spearheaded the creation of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research; and as Minister of Industry and Minister of Infrastructure, where he introduced Canada's innovation strategy and championed Canada's three research granting councils. From 2003 to 2006, he served as Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations.

Mr. Rock was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1985, and sits on a number of boards including the United Nations Association of Canada and Save the Children Canada.

DR. ALAN WILDEMAN, University of Windsor

Dr. Alan Wildeman took office as President of the University of Windsor, after serving as the University of Guelph's Vice-President of Research since 2001. His long-standing history with the University of Guelph began as a doctoral student in genetics; he later moved into progressively responsible positions that included Director of Guelph's Food System Biotechnology Centre and Director of its Ontario Centre for Agricultural Genomics.

Dr. Wildeman acknowledged an early awareness of the key role that universities play in helping people realize their potential and in advancing society, noting that universities make significant contributions to their host city, as both the institution and the city itself anticipate and respond to change. He said, "I am encouraged by the willingness to embrace challenges at the University of Windsor and, most importantly, by the quality and commitment of our faculty and staff to embrace the future."

Dr. Wildeman has served as Chair of one of COU's key affiliates, the Ontario Council on University Research; as a member of advisory committees for a number of national research centres; and as a member of the Board of Directors of BIOTECanada.

In addition, Dr. Wildeman, who earned his BA and MA in biology from the University of Saskatchewan, has published widely on molecular biology and genetics.

DR. JOEL SOKOLSKY, Royal Military College of Canada

Dr. Joel Sokolsky, who is currently Dean of Arts at the Royal Military College (RMC), will assume the office of Principal of RMC in August.

A political scientist, Dr. Sokolsky joined RMC as a faculty member in 1986 and, since then, has become a driving force for positive change at the institution. In his new role as principal, he said, "I will continue Dr. Cowan's outstanding work in emphasizing academic excellence in research and teaching at our institution and the importance of both in promoting military excellence, and I want to raise RMC's profile within Canada by inviting personalities from business, scientific research and the arts to spend time at RMC as visiting scholars." Dr. Sokolsky also hopes to expand student and faculty exchanges.

Prior to joining RMC, Dr. Sokolsky taught at Dalhousie University in Halifax, and at Duke University in North Carolina and Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts as a Visiting Canada-U.S. Fulbright Scholar. He has also served as a consultant to the Canadian government in his areas of expertise: defence policy, U.S. foreign and defence policy, and modern naval strategy.

Dr. Sokolsky holds a BA from the University of Toronto, an MA from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, and a PhD from Harvard University. He is published widely and is the recipient of several scholarships and awards.

Launch of micro site on academic integrity at Ontario universities

This summer, COU will be launching a new feature on its website that focuses on academic integrity. The micro site, which will be accessible via a link on COU's home page (www.cou.on.ca), will provide a centralized source of information on the ethics and processes that surround academic integrity.

The Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV), in collaboration with COU, undertook this initiative, in part due to our universities' ongoing commitment to accountability in all aspects of their operation and in part due to a number of articles and publications that surfaced in early 2007 – one of which raised concerns about the scope and nature of cheating at postsecondary institutions, and the manner in which the universities addressed the issue.

Resources on the micro site will include teaching tools, case studies and research, along with a link to each Ontario university and its individual policies and processes concerning academic integrity.

For more information on the micro site, contact Research Associate Jennie Piekos (jpiekos@cou.on.ca).

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Innovation and student-centred initiatives focus of inaugural COUPN awards

Nursing faculty, students, staff and program partners whose hard work and dedication have advanced Ontario's healthcare system were honoured with the first-ever Council of Ontario University Programs in Nursing (COUPN) awards. The eight newly created awards focus on four key areas – student achievement, excellence in teaching, innovation in research, and partnership support.

"Our job is to ensure that we prepare students to not only provide the best treatment to patients, but also be proactive in advancing Ontario's healthcare system through education and research," said Dr. Kileen Tucker Scott, Chair of COUPN. "These awards celebrate the innovation and creativity that individuals bring to this transformation, and together they demonstrate the outstanding progress made by our nursing programs."

At an awards ceremony held in Toronto on May 9, 2008, awards were handed out to 10 individuals. From Lakehead University's School of Nursing, Director and Associate Professor Karen Poole and Associate Professor Patricia Sevean shared the Teaching Innovation Award for their efforts in maintaining a student-focused approach to education. Barbara Gough, Senior Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, was honoured with the Strategic Contribution to Nursing Education Award for her efforts in promoting initiatives that have strengthened nursing education in Ontario.

Other winners were Carol Fine, Professor, Ryerson University (Teaching Excellence Award); Linda Muraca, a student at the University of Toronto (Master's Student Award of Excellence); students Alexandra Harris and Andrea Monahan from Queen's University and the University of Ottawa respectively (Award of Excellence in Professional Nursing Practice – Undergraduate); Dr. Faith Donald, a PhD graduate from McMaster University (Doctoral Dissertation Award); Kingston General Hospital, represented by Eleanor Rivoire (Agency Recognition Award); and Judi Wilson, a preceptor for the University of Windsor (Preceptor Recognition Award).

Ontario universities continue to weigh disclosure of information against protection of privacy

Issues surrounding privacy practices at postsecondary institutions have resurfaced recently, and have reinforced the university sector's commitment to diligently weigh the need for disclosure of information against the protection of privacy, to adhere to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) as well as to guidelines put forth by Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian.

Council has continued its support of the legislation by highlighting the importance of FIPPA at meetings of Executive Heads, the Ontario Universities' Public Affairs Council and various standing committees. Ontario universities' FIPPA co-ordinators, collectively overseen by the COU Task Force on Access and Privacy Issues, continue to meet regularly to review the procedures surrounding the legislation, share information and keep abreast of new issues that may come forth.

COU re-circulated to its members an important fact sheet, issued by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, that outlines the manner in which information should be disclosed when faced with emergencies or urgent circumstances involving privacy. It notes examples and cases of disclosure, and showcases the duties and obligations of FIPPA co-ordinators to assist them in the judgement process.